for the victims of smallpox. If family traditions also tell of those shot, not in war, but as prisoners, perhaps, a candle is lighted for them outside the cemetery wall. Though the couple may perform this ceremony together, each makes this request of the dead of his or her own family as the candles are lighted. This call on the dead is repeated several days after the marriage or later, when candles are again lighted.

The sole exception to the performance of these rites before the new household is begun occurs in those cases of *plaçage* where a girl continues to live at her own home. This is rare, however, for the house of a man is usually built near that of his father, and he takes his wife there. But if special circumstances dictate otherwise, the ceremony of notifying and pacifying the family deities may be deferred, though a man must eventually present every woman with whom he lives to his family gods and in turn must be presented to the gods of the woman's family. In similar fashion the dead of both families must be adequately notified.

Marriages rarely take place in the months of November and December, the former being disliked because it is "the month of the dead," during which All Saints' Day occurs, and the latter because it ends the year. Except for the Church wedding and less elaborate festivities to celebrate the event, the rites which mark a *plaçage* mating do not greatly differ from those which mark a legal marriage, which may be described in outline. The favorite day for Church marriages is Saturday, "the day of the Virgin," and the time for the ceremony is always early morning, before the heat of the day has set in. If the home of the girl is some distance from Mirebalais, the party come to town the preceding day, the girl spending the night with some friend. Otherwise the bridegroom, accompanied by his relatives and friends, goes to the house of the girl early Saturday morning. Before the couple leave the home of her parents, water must be thrown on the ground in front of them, and also sprinkled by them before the en-

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today not only in Mirebalais, but, in their essential outlines, throughout the Republic.

The larger relationship grouping originates in the immediate family, and the formation of new extended families is a continuing act. Characteristically, the process begins when a man leaves the habitation of his father and, with his wife, settles on land somewhat remote from the dwellings of either his people or those of his wife. As the sons of this couple grow up and marry, they make their homes near that of their father, so that in time a group of immediate families related in the paternal line clusters about the dwelling of this original settler, forming a habitation. The continuation of the process depends upon the amount of land available to the group; in any event, given enough time, land to permit all the male descendants of the founder to support themselves and their families will be lacking, so that the younger men will repeat the process that has been described, and themselves become the founders of new habitations whose members, with the passing of generations, will eventually be lost to the original group. While land is available, a young man is given several hectares by his father when he marries, and here he establishes his household. If the family have prospered, additional land is bought as more young men grow up, so that the relationship group may become a community of considerable size.

In accordance with this rule of residence, only rarely will a man settle on the property of his wife's parents, since to do so reflects unfavorably on his personal status. When this does occur, it is probably because of a serious quarrel with his own people. In such a case, if his marriage endures, he becomes a quasi-member of his wife's family, but unless he has committed some extremely grave offense, such as publicly insulting or striking a parent or grandparent, he does not forfeit membership in his own group.[1] Similarly, the fact of his having settled away from the habitation of his family does not disinherit him, for, as will be seen, this occurs only but the

rarest of instances, and only by fixed legal procedure, since mere verbal denial of family rights cannot deprive a person of his inheritance.

Within the immediate family it is the duty of the man to procure food for his wife and children. When his fields have been harvested, the produce is taken to the house and given to the wife, who retains a portion of it for the needs of the household and sells the surplus at the market, using the money to buy clothing and other necessaries for her husband, her children, and herself. A part of the sum she receives may be used to purchase animals to be used for transport, food, or breeding purposes; and whatever money is left over is saved, particularly if a desirable plot of ground is available, or a mass and ceremony for the ancestors or promised rituals for the gods are in prospect. The woman, who is held to be more thrifty than the man, is thus the banker of the family. Her opinion is prized by her husband, and though a man has the legal right to dispose of a horse or a cow or his own land as he desires, in most households nothing would be done until the wife was consulted. It is true that quarrels often arise concerning family funds held by the wife, especially when a man questions the accounting given him, or on occasion when he wants money to bet on a cock-fight or for drinking or other personal needs whose cost he does not care to have reviewed. But for many men the problem is quite well solved by the expedient of deducting a sum from his earnings without telling his wife that she has not been given the full amount.

It is only in relatively small matters that the membership of a household acts as a self-determining unit. In affairs of greater moment the extended family must figure, for despite the informality of its organization — at least as manifested in Mirebalais — and its lack of legal sanction, its power, especially as lodged in the old folk, is none the less real. It is because of this that it is said: "The peasant consults his elders about everything he does." When a transaction of some im-

[6] Mackenzie, ii. 125.
[7] St. John, 162.
[8] Cf. Price-Mars (I), 200–2.
[9] Price-Mars (I), 203, gives this as the proper age for a man of the region of Kenscoff, near Port-au-Prince, to marry.
[10] Cf. Price-Mars (I), 216.
[11] Ibid., 210–18. A facsimile of this letter is given on pp. 213–15.
[12] Ibid., 216–17.
[13] Mackenzie, i. 58.
[14] St. John, 153–6.
[15] St. John, 145.
[16] Mackenzie, i. 53. Wirkus, 222, mentions a case of polygyny on the Isle à Gonave where the wives apparently inhabited one compound with their mutual husband.

CHAPTER VII

[1] This seems to differ in various parts of Haiti; thus, near Port-au-Prince, the father of the girl "designates to his future son-in-law the land where his house is to be built," according to Price-Mars (I), 216.
[2] Cf. Parsons (I), 165.
[3] Among the obligations of the peasant mentioned by Price-Mars (I), 34, is "the respect due to the elders who are the repositories of tradition."

CHAPTER VIII

[1] Whether or not vodun is a religion, a problem which Haitian writers (e.g., Price-Mars (I), 32 ff.) are prone to debate at length, need not be considered here, since to an ethnologist the answer is too patently affirmative to require discussion.
[2] St. Mery, i. 45–6.
[3] Ibid., i. 46.
[4] De Vaumière, 178–9.
[5] Dorsainvil (I), 156 ff.; Price-Mars (I), 39.
[6] For a useful resumé of statements concerning Haitian serpent-worship, the grievous misunderstanding of which is an outstanding characteristic of this honest but ill-conceived work, see Williams, passim.
[7] Price-Mars (I), 118 ff., also records his belief that serpent-worship is far less important than it has been represented, saying: "We believe it to be well-nigh abolished." Seabrook, 310–12, also holds to this view.
[8] Parsons (I), 137, states: "There is little or no philosophic or religious expression of the theory to be